

CIPA

Libraries that use Federal funds for purchases for either Internet access (E-rate) or technology that accesses the Internet (Tech Grants) are required to be compliant with CIPA.

The main parts of CIPA that concern libraries are the regulations around Internet policies and filtering.

Internet policy

1. The library must have an internet safety policy that addresses 5 elements regarding internet access and minors. The wording doesn't have to be exactly like the handout, but the idea has to be there.
 - a. access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet;
 - b. the safety and security of minors when using electronic communications (i.e., email, social networks, online chat, etc.) ;
 - c. unauthorized access, including "hacking," and other unlawful activities by minors online;
 - d. unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and
 - e. measures designed to restrict minors' access to materials harmful to minors.
2. The library must have a public meeting to approve the Internet safety/use policy and that proof of that meeting must be retained. Proof can be the published agenda or advertisement of the meeting that includes what topics of discussion will be, or the minutes of the meeting showing that the policy was discussed and approved.
3. I would recommend that not only does the agenda/advertisement or minutes need to be dated, but also the internet safety/use policy itself. Having a date on the policy will help show when last it was reviewed and revised.

Filtering

1. All library computers must have filtering installed, which includes all staff computers or at the source (router, switch, etc.). Filtering can be turned off on staff computers, but it still has to be present/installed.
2. Patron equipment does not have to be filtered. Patrons, however, are still obligated to follow the internet policy of the library, since they are using a service provided by the library.
3. With the Supreme Court ruling in 2003, the guidelines to help libraries follow CIPA state that the filter may be turned off upon request by a patron who is 17 years or older for any lawful purpose. Based on this ruling, the filter used must be able to be turned off at the workstation level.
4. For CIPA, the filter is intended to protect against access by adults and minors to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or – with respect to use of computers with internet access by minors – harmful to minors. However, libraries can certainly set the filter to block whatever they want. The law does not list any particular site as one to block.